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JONATHAN SWIFT.

In a certain gallery of paintings, there hang side by side two portraits which arrest the attention of every visitor. In the one we admire the finely chiselled features, the kindly but penetrating expression of the deep blue eyes, the delicate, slightly sarcastic curve of the lips and the fine glow of manhood's strength that pervades the whole face. In the other appears the same cast of features, but the expression seems that of a being of a different nature. From the eyes all kindness is gone, and to their penetration is added an almost savage fierceness; the curve of the lips expresses no more a playful sarcasm, but a deep and lasting scorn; and every trait reveals a soul that has suffered without submission, has struggled without victory, and ended in hatred, defiance and contempt. Yet both bear the name of *Jonathan Swift*, at forty-one and at sixty-five.

What a problem is here presented! And as the inner man is revealed in the expressions of his countenance, so is he, even more fully, in his writings. Place side by side "The Tale of a Tub", written when he was thirty, and the last book of "Gulliver's Travels," of the antiquarian Swift. Again there is likeness and contrast. "The Tale of a Tub" is instinct with the buoyancy, the strength with the audacity of a young man who fells himself above his fellows. It is satire, merciless satire, yet it is far more the reveling of a young giant in the exercise of his prodigious power, than the blow aimed by one who has himself suffered. But in the last book of "Gulliver," with the same power, the same clear-cut and characteristic style, the same marvellous penetration of human nature, the sparkling wine of youthful vigor and pride has given place to the gall of bitterness and misanthropy.

Now Swift was none of your painfully laborious arti-

ficers of sentences; as he himself tells us, he never leaned upon his elbow to think, and he held in contempt those who did. When he speaks, he speaks straight from the inner man. And so he is, of all the writers of his age, the one who arouses in us the strongest desire to know more of his personality. Though he was born in Ireland, and spent more years there than anywhere else, he had as little in common with that impulsive, hot-blooded, genial Irish race as any man that ever lived. Indeed there was not a drop of Irish blood in his veins. It was thus by the merest accident that this country became the birthplace of Swift. He was born in Dublin in 1667, born to poverty and dependence, for his father who had died seven months before his son's birth, had left nothing to support his widow and her two children. Here, then, at the very outset we have a clue to explain in part that bitterness which grew as the man grew — the consciousness, so galling to a proud nature, of owing his worldly sustenance and his education at Trinity College, Dublin, to the charity of others.

He never looked back with any pleasure to his college days. But it is a false story that represents him as a reckless rebel against authority; and any young gentleman at college who wants to play genius by refusing to submit to the prescribed course of study will find little precedent in the case of Swift. It is true that he was unhappy and constantly brooding over his position as a poor relation; no doubt, too, the dry and scholastic course of study was irksome to a young man of his independence and originality of thought; but it cannot be proved that he shirked his duty or defied the authorities. He seems to have read widely in the ancient classics, and on his final examination is graded as "good" in Latin and Greek. Only in "physics" — a general term for the miscellaneous and unsystematized body of scientific facts then current in the schools — is he graded as "bad." It is due to this last that he only received his bachelor's degree by a special favor, *speciali gratia* as it was termed, no great disgrace consider-

ing that it was very common to grant degrees in this manner, but of course galling to the pride of a Swift.

After taking his degree, Swift continued for the next two or three years at Trinity College, Dublin, reading widely for his Master's Degree, and no doubt meditating deeply on the world and his own lot therein. Already conscious of a power within, as he must have been, he knew not yet where to apply that power; knew not, indeed, what the nature or extent of that power was. Poor, proud, unknown, his immediate prospects were anything but promising. Already, however, he had begun to write, although it was not until several years later that he discovered his true vein.

The Revolution of 1688 was also a revolution in the early life of Swift. Amid the turbulent state of things in Ireland, there was no peace or safety, and, with many of his countrymen, Swift crossed over to England where he lived for a time with his mother in Leicester. But this was not making a start in life. "A person of great honor in Ireland," he afterwards writes, "who was pleased to stoop so low as to look into my mind, used to tell me that my mind was like a conjured spirit, that would do mischief if I did not give it employment." Never was truer word spoken. Such a mind must have food to devour, else it would devour itself. It was fortunate that an opening was soon made for him — an opening which for good and evil, but chiefly for good, was to prove of lasting influence upon his life. This was the offer and acceptance of employment in the family of Sir William Temple, who was a distant relative of Swift's mother, where he remained until Temple's death in 1699.

Much has been said of Swift's relation to his patron. Temple was perhaps never fully awake to the greatness of his young protégé, but it is plain that his esteem for him and confidence in him constantly increased; Swift's position developed steadily from that of a semi-menial to that of a trusted intimate, and he seems to have had a cordial esteem for Sir William in spite of a number of vexations and slights which brought about a succession of temporary

estrangements. What, above all, stamped itself upon the supremely, even morbidly proud nature of Swift was, that he was in the position of a dependent, of one patronized. This was the bitter pill for him to swallow — the bitter pill that helped to poison much of his whole life. Still the example of a man of urbane and courtly manners, such as Temple, must have been of great service to the raw and crude young fellow who had seen little of the polite world. But, above all, he obtained at Temple's house a practical knowledge of politics and politicians such as hardly any other place could have furnished so well. Not only prominent men at the court, but King William himself came to Temple to consult him about public affairs; and his young secretary was present at their consultations. He was even on one occasion sent by Temple to the king to explain to him certain measures of government upon which his majesty had consulted him. Swift thus came to know early the practical side of affairs, to see, as his keen eye saw but too clearly, the littleness of many of the men who posed as the great ones of the earth; and to this practical knowledge is due much of the directness, clearness and effectiveness of these political pamphlets which afterward made him by turns the mainstay and the terror of the Whig and the Tory party.

Swift's talents became known to men of influence, though the offer to him by the king of a position as captain of a company of dragoons seems to show that the nature of those talents was hardly appreciated by his Dutch majesty. It is needless to say that Swift refused, and needless to speculate as to what the result would have been to himself and to literature, had he accepted.

The literary influences of this formative period must also be taken into account, although there is perhaps no prose writer in the language who borrowed as little and originated as much, as Swift. To Temple, and to the French models to which he was directed in Temple's library, may be attributed much of that clearness and simplicity which

marks Swift's prose writings almost from the beginning. At least it pointed the way to that style which a mind like Swift's would certainly have attained, sooner or later. The only English books he read much were books of history. Greek, Latin, and recent French authors formed the main body of his reading. He was attracted by the whole range of human knowledge—history, science (such as it was), philosophy, magic—everything, but mostly ancient, and in the learned languages. Much of the vast and miscellaneous knowledge thus acquired, figures in the "Tale of a Tub," to puzzle and often to baffle even a cultured reader.

Swift, like so many other literary men, commenced his career with a mistake. Adapting himself to a fad of the time, he composed a number of what were called "Pindaric Odes." But artificial and unnatural as they are, we find not a few characteristic traits breaking through a false and conventional form. In the "Ode to Sir William Temple," especially, written in 1693, there is a passage which shows how his true instinct is beginning to revolt, and we can see in the address to his muse a sort of a programme for the restless ambition of his subsequent career.

"To thee I owe that fatal bent of mind,
Still to unhappy, restless thoughts inclined;
To thee, what oft I vainly strive to hide,
That scorn of fools, by fools mistook for pride;
From thee whatever virtue takes its rise,
Grows a misfortune or becomes a vice;
Such were thy rules to be poetically great:
'Stoop not to interest, flattery, or deceit;
Nor with hired thoughts be thy devotion paid;
Learn to disdain their mercenary aid;
Be this thy sure defence, thy braxen wall,
Know no base action, at no guilt turn pale.'"

A copy of these "Pindaric Odes" Swift sent to Dryden, the lord of literature at the time, and a distant cousin. "Cousin Swift, you will never be a poet," was Dryden's well-known verdict—a verdict which Swift must have felt to be in many ways just, although he bitterly resented it. As

a matter of fact, Swift never *did* become a poet in the higher sense, a poet of the imagination, though in the narrow line of clever, incisive verse to which he afterward confined himself, he is hardly surpassed.

But while he was giving to the world "Pindaric Odes," he had in his portfolio, more or less unfinished work which he was not yet confident enough to publish. "He writ and burnt and writ again," he writes to a friend, "on all manner of subjects, more than perhaps any man in England." That amazing medley, the "Tale of a Tub," was the product of years of this "writing and burning and writing again," the literary embodiment of the vast reading, keen observation, burning thought and intense feeling of these years.

The "Tale of a Tub" hardly has a central subject, and certainly has no method. It is the outpouring of a mind struggling for expression. Like Carlyle before he wrote his "Sartor Resartus," he felt that "he had a book in him that would make men's ears tingle." The subjects he had to have his say upon were as wide as the world. "In my disposition of the employments of the brain I have thought fit to make invention the master, and to give to method and reason the office of its lackeys." He had looked at the world with his own eyes, and seen beneath the surface of things; seen pretense in its nakedness, seen the multitude deluded by shows, and he could not rest until he had laid them bare.

The "Tale of a Tub" is often referred to as an allegory. It is true that a thread of allegory in which the Roman Catholic, the Lutheran and the Calvinistic forms of religion appear as Peter, Martin and Jack, gives a semblance of unity to the medley. But this allegory is its weakest part. It is often strained, often obscure, yet it is clever, and sometimes more than clever, as a means of conveying piercing truth. Swift, however, is perfectly conscious of the weakness of the allegorical method, and disarms criticism by satirizing himself, in the "grubæan sages" who conveyed:

"Their precepts and their arts shut up within the vehicles of type and

fables; which having been perhaps more careful and curious in adorning than was altogether necessary, it has fared with these vehicles, after the usual fate of coaches over-finely painted and gilt, that the transitory gazers have so dazzled their eyes and filled their imaginations with the outward lustre, as neither to regard nor consider the person or the parts of the owner within."

That Swift abuses allegory in his satire cannot be denied. The adherents of the three main forms of European religion, the Roman Catholic, the Anglican-Lutheran and the Calvinistic Presbyterian are typified by three sons, Peter, Martin and Jack, and the religious forms themselves appear as three coats bequeathed by their father who represents of course, original christianity before the rise of sects. To portray the abuses and the extravagances of bigots and fanatics, these three sons, especially Peter and Jack, for Martin is the type of the Church of England which Swift is disposed to defend, are made to do all sorts of ridiculous and disreputable things, which inevitably have the effect of making light of all religion so that it is not hard to understand that Swift brought upon himself the charge of infidelity and that the skeptics should have hailed him as their champion, though as a matter of fact, Swift was not irreligious, and in practice was a warm defender of the church. But in the "Tale of a Tub," he allows the exuberant joy in the exercise of power to get the better of him and to carry him beyond the limits of his real beliefs. With the mighty weapon of satire and travesty in his hand, the eager fencer wounds his own friends.

But, as has been said, the religious allegory is not the strongest part of the work. More powerful and far less liable to offend any but those who deserve the lash, are the long digressions in which the whole body of book-makers and pretenders to learning is ridiculed in a strange mixture of parody and direct attack. The custom of lumbering up a book with long and tiresome prefaces and dedications is deliciously taken off in his own preliminary matter, which he makes to cover more than one-fourth of the whole work. No idea can be obtained of the immense range and concen-

tration of satire in these general and special prefaces, author's apologies, analytic table of contents, dedication to Prince Posterity and the rest, without close reading and hardly any book will repay reading and rereading better than the "Tale of a Tub." There is meaning in every line and between every line, a mine of wit and wisdom that may be worked long and yet be unexhausted. Swift is said to have once exclaimed in his old age: "My God, what a genius I had when I wrote that book!" And it is indeed a work of genius that, if he had written nothing else, would have placed him in the front rank of our English satirists.

Swift would surely have found much in common with our great nineteenth century exposé of shams, Thomas Carlyle; and between no works of the two authors is it possible to draw a closer parallel than between the "Tale of a Tub" and "Sartor Resartus." Each is the earliest book produced by its author—the torrent of long accumulated thought that longed to be set free; each is supremely humorous and supremely original; the purpose of each is to expose shams, to strip off clothes and to bring people to look at things as they are. But Swift goes no further than to denounce and to ridicule. He destroys with no attempt to build upon the ruins of his destruction. He reaches the everlasting No, but supplies no everlasting Yea. The logical result of Swift's view is despair, while Carlyle rears from the ashes a castle of Faith and Hope. This difference is, indeed, less marked when we consider the two men than when we consider the two books—for I cannot but feel that there is a deeper earnestness and faith in Swift, the man, than ever appears in Swift, the writer. Yet in spite of the many real resemblances, Carlyle's was a more positive and a more fruitful nature than Swift's. "Happiness," says Swift, "is the perpetual possession of being well deceived." He, then, who sees things as they are cannot be happy. Carlyle, too, had no patience with the illusive rush after that rainbow-gold that men call "Hap-

piness," but he goes further than Swift, and points to a rock of truth beyond all shams and illusions on which we may rest, if not "happy," yet serene and hopeful. Swift may have felt the everlasting Yea, but he never proclaimed it before men.

Of the "Battle of the Books" there is need to say but little. It was written to save Temple, who had fallen into certain very grave errors of scholarship that brought upon him an attack from Bentley, the greatest classicist of the age. Probably no other man living could have saved Temple as Swift did by the "Battle of the Books." The merits of the case did not concern him at all. But no argument of the somewhat heavy and pedantic Bentley, however convincing to the scholar, could stand in the eyes of the majority of readers before the satire of Swift. Truth and scholarship, protest as they might, were unavailing.

Temple died in 1699, and with his death ends the first period of Swift's career. His motives for entering the Church have often been questioned. Let it be confessed that he did not look at the clerical profession as a "divine calling." He entered the Church, not from any burning desire to preach the Gospel, but because the Church furnished an occupation more congenial to his tastes and manner of life than any other profession readily open to him; and also, because it offered a sure means of support. Still he was, and always remained, a strong and earnest believer in the Establishment as the main stronghold and promoter of morality. This is the keynote of his writings on subjects connected with the church. He does not argue for christianity from the spiritual point of view, but from the purely practical; he simply contends that if you abolish christianity, you will abolish all restraints upon men's vices, and hence all order and civilization. He never takes the higher ground, never preaches the gospel of love, of spiritual force in the inner man; which is only to say, that he does not rise above his age.

What his real religion was is a question too serious to

be lightly touched upon. Certainly we must beware of judging from a partial or superficial view of his writings. There are passages in the "Tale of a Tub" that seem positively blasphemous, and we could quote from his works to show that he ridiculed the dogmas of the Last Judgment and an eternal punishment of bodily torment; it would be easy to furnish a prosecuting committee of theologians with ample evidence to convict him. But this is far from proving that he lacked the essence of religion.

But every earnest student of Swift must feel that back of all the strange and contradictory phases of his dark and stormy life, there lies a mystery which was never unveiled, a soul, which in spite of all his seeming frankness and want of reticeness, he concealed instinctively from the eyes of the world. Let us not therefore pronounce hastily upon what we do not, and never can know—not even in deference to that "scientific spirit" of our age, which has worked so much good by what it has rescued from dilettanteism, but which, I fear, has often worked harm to itself and to truth by seeking irreverently to invade a higher and holier ground that is only desecrated by its touch.

It was however in politics rather than in the church that Swift's real ambition lay. Directly after Temple's death he accepted a post as secretary to Lord Berkeley, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and with him he remained some months in the governor's castle in Dublin. But as no chance for further promotion from the government offered itself, he again accepted a number of church livings in country districts in Ireland. He made his clerical home at Laracor, a small vicarage near the town of Trim, some thirty miles from Dublin. His Irish headquarters were here until 1713, when he was made Dean of St. Patrick's. As far as friends and quiet comfort could make him so, this was the happiest period of Swift's life; and had he not been pursued by ambition and restlessness, he might have been content.

But not all of Swift's time was spent in Ireland. From now on he became more and more deeply interested in pol-

itics. As a member of Temple's household, his early political connection was naturally with the Whigs, and his first political pamphlet, "Dissentions in Athens and Rome," was written in support of that party. We have not time to go into the details of his gradual breach with the Whigs and alliance with the Tories—a breach which was finally completed in 1710. Nor is there any need to justify his action. Swift was, in a certain sense, above parties, and he bitterly satirized their pettiness long before the time of "Gulliver's Travels," when his satire might be imputed to his own disappointments. Yet he had his prejudices, above all, he exercised the most watchful care over the interests of the Church, and it was largely due to this that he came to embrace Tory principles. The pamphlets entitled "An Argument against abolishing Christianity" and "The Sentiments of a Church of England Man," among others, show Swift's views very clearly, and we can see from them how impossible it was for him to act longer with the Whig party. He hated the skeptics and he hated the dissenters, and both of these classes came to be identified in one way or another with the Whigs.

Each party was anxious to have Swift in its ranks, for men recognized everywhere that here was the man of the keenest satirical power in England, one who would be of the greatest value as a friend and the greatest danger as an enemy. In 1710, while on one of his frequent visits to England, this time in the interest of the Irish Church, both parties made overtures to him. This was in the last part of poor Queen Anne's reign, and the Tories were in power. He could make his fortune, they hinted. "But," he says, "I do not understand them; or, rather, I *do* understand them." He assumed a haughty and indepent air, allowed himself to be beseeched, and finally threw himself in with the Tories with all the vigor of his extraordinary nature.

From that time until the death of the queen, three years later, he was the greatest power in the Tory party. He published a journal, "The Examiner" and issued pamphlet

after pamphlet defending Tory measures and denouncing the Whigs. An enormous number of these pamphlets was printed and circulated, and in an age which took an absorbing interest in politics, their influence was enormous. The "Conduct of the Allies" is probably the strongest of these pamphlets, and it is further interesting as an excellent specimen of a phase of Swift's style quite different from that which we ordinarily associate with him. It is not a satire, but a political invective against the foreign war that was draining the resources of England. Simple and clear in its arguments, scathing in its contempt and impassioned in its plea for peace, it rises to the height of the best oratory. Appealing to the "voice of the Nation" he says: "We have been principals when we ought to have been auxillaries; we have fought where we ought not, and have abstained where our interests were at stake; we have allowed those allies who charge us with deserting them to be false to every engagement made with us. We have preseed, until we lie under the burden of fifty millions of debt. We have gained victories which have brought to us nothing but barren renown, and now we are expiring of a 'hundred good symptoms.'"

Swift's personal power was at this time that of an autocrat, and his ambition seems to have been at last gratified. Many stories are told of his disposition to be overbearing and tyrannical. No one could escape his wrath without yielding to his will. To those who were willing to yield he was kind and gracious. On first meeting lady Burlington at her husband's house he ordered her to sing. When she declined, Swift became angry. "Sing, or I will make you! Why, madam, I suppose you take me for one of your English hedge-parsons; sing when I tell you!" She burst into tears and retired. The next time he met her he began, "Pray, madam, are you as proud and ill-natured as when I saw you last?" She good humoredly gave in, and Swift became her warm friend.

Among literary men, Swift's influence was all powerful.

His friendship with Addison had begun years before and still continued in spite of party differences; and it was under Swift's influence that Addison first commenced his great work of making a new and better thing out of English prose. He was one of the first to recognize and encourage Pope and became his close friend. The famous Scriblerus Club, out of which "*Gulliver's Travels*" grew, was composed of Swift, Pope, Gay, Arbuthnot and others, but Swift was recognized as the dominant power. We might almost say that Swift's indirect influence or letters was as great as were his direct services.

These literary friendships were more lasting than his political connections. When Queen Anne died in 1714, the Tories fell and Swift fell with them. He had shortly before been appointed Dean of St. Patrick's, Dublin, and now that all hope in England was gone, he left it in bitterness and disappointment to spend the rest of his life in Ireland.

There was, however, one thing that brightened his return. When Swift first went to Sir William Temple's, he found, among those attached to his household, a Mrs. Johnson and her daughter, Esther Johnson, a little girl of eight. This little girl from that time to her death in 1728 was watched over and cared for by Swift, and his watchfulness and care were returned by a love as pure, as constant and unselfish as ever woman gave to man. Esther or Stella, had long been in Ireland and when Swift was absent she usually lived in his house and saw to his affairs. The affection that Swift had for her was the deepest, tenderest affection of his life, but it was not love and it is plain that he never contemplated a marriage. But, though he was not a lover, he was the most loving of friends. Nothing in all his writings shows as much of his true character as that one of them which he never intended for publication, the "*Journal to Stella*," little notes written daily to her during the exciting years of his political career in England. Here we see no more the sour cynic, but the freest and most unreserved expression of the truly tender side of his nature.

Thackeray, whose judgment and appreciation in these matters may be relied upon more than that of most men, says: "It has been my business, professionally of course, to go through a great deal of sentimental reading in my time, and to acquaint myself with love making as it has been described in various languages of the world; and I know nothing more manly, more tender, more exquisitely touching than some of these brief notes written in what Swift calls his 'little language' in his "Journal to Stella."

It is most unfortunate for Swift's memory that we must connect with him the *two* names of Stella and Vanessa, instead of the name of Stella alone. A second woman appears on the scene and with the second woman comes the inevitable misery for all three. During his last stay in London, he had become interested in a young lady of beauty, talents and fortune, Miss Hester Vanhomrigh. The verses entitled "Cadenus and Vanessa," in which Cadenus is a transposition of Decanus, or the Dean, and Vanessa, of course, stands for Miss Vanhomrigh, give a history of the case which accords perfectly with what we know from other sources. The very fact that "we can use what, for want of a better classification we must call a love poem, as though it were an affidavit in a lawsuit,"¹ shows how incapable Swift was of the passion of love. He admired Vanessa because she possessed the charms without the frivolity of her sex because she was inclined to serious study and showed appreciation of his own precepts, but he never loved her.

"His conduct might have made him styled
A father, and the nymph his child.
That innocent delight he took
To see the virgin mind her book,
Was but the master's secret joy
In school to hear the finest boy."

But the lessons which were aimed at Vanessa's head, reached her heart, and with the frankness which her master

¹ Leslie Stephen: "Life of Swift" (Eng. Men of Letters.)

had taught her, she confessed her love. He is utterly taken aback. He reasons and expostulates with her in vain. She will not listen to his argument that such love of a young girl for a man who was growing old and had lost all the charms of youth, was preposterous. She shows how her love is but the natural result of his own teachings. Swift was flattered, and he allowed himself to be loved when he had only friendship to offer in return.

Soon after Swift went to Ireland, Vanessa settled there also, and thus was near enough to hear of Stella. Swift became uneasy, grew colder in his letters, and avoided seeing her as much as possible. Poor Vanessa became more passionate. Swift grew more perplexed. The catastrophe was imminent. Stella could not fail to hear rumors of Swift's relations with Vanessa, and it seems that to make sure once for all of her own position, she urged Swift to that ceremony of marriage, which, it seems, she might justly have demanded long before. Whether they were married or not, has been questioned. I think the evidence proves that they were. At any rate, the report got abroad and reached Vanessa's ears. She at once wrote to Stella to ask if it were true, Stella replied that it was, and handed the letter to Swift. In a rage he rode to Vanessa's, entered her room, threw down the letter upon the table, and rode off without saying a word. Vanessa did not long survive. Her already failing health succumbed to this last, awful blow.

Was Swift to blame? Certainly he *was* to blame, but perhaps more to be pitied. He is not to be judged as an ordinary man. He was incapable of the passion of love himself, and could not understand it in others. Not until it was too late did he become aware of the fearful consequences to which an unrequited passion could lead, and the catastrophe overwhelmed him with grief and remorse.

Stella survived Vanessa for five years, but she cannot have been happy. She never lived in the deanery except in Swift's absence. When the end did come, in 1728, Swift did not see her, nor did he attend her funeral. She had

sacrificed for him everything that most women care for, and served him to the end with a devotion almost unparalleled, and Swift had been faithful to Stella, though he never made her happy. We can never expect to understand exactly the mystery of Swift and Stella. There was a mystery somewhere. About the time of their supposed marriage, a friend met Swift rushing out of Archbishop King's library with a distracted look. On entering he found the Archbishop in tears, and on asking the reason, he said: "You have just met the most unhappy man on earth, but on the subject of his wretchedness you must never ask a question." Unhappy as was the lot of Stella and Vanessa, I cannot but feel that the lot of Swift was more unhappy still. After his death, a lock of Stella's hair was found in his desk, and on the envelope which contained it were written the words of such infinite pathos in suggestiveness: "Only a woman's hair."

The darkest epoch in his life remains. His most cherished hopes had been disappointed and he found himself banished to a country which he detested; and condemned, as he himself expressed it, to die there, "like a poisoned rat in a hole." It is a strange thing that the man who had the supremest contempt for Ireland now became one of its very greatest patriots. However small was Swift's opinion of Irish capacity, his indignation was fierce against Irish wrongs. "The Drapier's Letters," although they were occasioned directly by an imaginary and not a real wrong — for the copper coin he denounced in them was as a matter of fact very good — sounded the first clear and bold note for Irish liberty. The Irish people idolized him as their champion and defender, and he *was* their champion and defender from pure hatred of and indignation against the brutal oppression he saw; but he had passed the time when he could derive pleasure from the plaudits of the multitude.

Swift made one visit and one visit only to England during this latter period, but that visit was a fruitful one for

English literature. It was then that he published "*Gulliver's Travels*," the work of a number of years previous. The story of *Gulliver* is too familiar to repeat, and its meaning is too wide and deep to enter upon here. We have all read it for the marvellous story, in our childhood, and been delighted with it, but to a mature man who reads it as it was intended by the author, it is not delightful, but one of the most painful books ever written. We may be amused at the Brobdingnagians and the Lilliputians, but, as the book progresses, the tone of universal fierce cynicism increases, until in the last horrible picture of humanity as represented by the nauseous Yahoos, we reach the very verge of pessimistic insanity.

Swift was indeed rapidly sinking into mental darkness. Throughout his life he had been afflicted by a painful disease of giddiness and pain in the head — what the physicians now call labyrinthine vertigo — and toward 1740 his disease rapidly increased. He seems always to have dreaded the end. Pointing to a tree one day, he said "Like that tree, I shall die at the top." He made an heroic struggle but finally sank into a state of speechless idiocy, in which he remained for three years until his death in 1745, at the age of seventy-seven. Upon his tombstone were inscribed lines written by himself, "Here lies Jonathan Swift, where fierce indignation can rend his heart no more."

Perhaps there is no man in the annals of English literature as great as Swift, who is so little read to-day, or at least read in the spirit of true appreciation. Swift never wrote for fame, never nursed his literary reputation, and sometimes even tried to conceal his authorship. Much was written for his own time only, and is intelligible only to students of that period. But even his works on subjects of perennial interest are not of such a nature as to attract the modern reader. He towers high above his age, not only as its greatest genius but as the most powerful factor in its literature. The influence of the clear, simple, direct style of Swift was enormous, and marks an epoch in English prose.

His personal influence was not less beneficial. Every writer of the time looked up to him as his superior, and he scattered the genuine gold of his genius profusely in suggestions and advice. More than one great literary work of other men owed its origin to Swift. But after all, it is the human interest that most attracts in him. His life is a tragedy that will always fascinate and appall.

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